

Many times in our thinking about the power of sin in our lives, we lose sight somewhat of the real driving force of that sin, which is Satan! It seems that we forget the personality behind it all; his craftiness and endurance. We must never drop our guard against Him.

I remember when I was a teenager, I took a course at the pool called 'Junior Lifesaving.' One of the things we had to learn to do was to disengage a struggling victim who was trying to use our head for a life-preserver! After teaching us a few basic defense moves, we were made to swim around in a circle while the instructors swam in behind or underneath us and grabbed one of us. Because I knew that they were sneaking up on me, believe me, I was on my guard!

But we forget that the devil is after the same thing, to sneak up on us while we are not thinking and cause us to stumble. To be on our guard we must try to understand how incredibly devious he really is. C.S. Lewis wrote a book called *The Screwtape Letters* in which he shows this pretty well, and I do recommend the reading of that book. A good Biblical example can be found, too, for Satan appeared twice in the person of one of Christ's friends, Simon Peter, for Christ says, 'Get behind me Satan!' To properly defend ourselves we must be aware of his presence, and put ourselves in his place to note our weaknesses and see how he might exploit them.

I had a friend that one time showed me a little judo. From the vantage point of lying flat on the ground I realized that whatever move that I made, he had used it against me. When I pushed him he just pulled me and sent me flying, and vice versa. Now the Devil knows this, too! If he could he would have us to never realize our sins, for example, so that we do not change our lives, and more particularly, become filled with the 'Holier than Thou' syndrome. But if we do recognize our sin he tries to fill us with despair at what he calls our 'worthlessness'.

Being neither worthless nor sinless, we must realize who is stronger, the devil or God. John tells us that God is light and that light overpowers darkness, not the other way around. Otherwise we could have a dark flashlight to shine on our wives when they have their hair in curlers. But God alone is strength, and he shares that strength with us. We read in James 4:7 that we should resist the devil and he will flee from us. We think of the devil as being our enemy, and fearing him; but we are equally his enemy, and with God on our side he is definitely afraid, for he believes and trembles.